

Panel Discussion (contd)

1       else on the panel have a response either to  
2       Bill or to Gerry at this point?

3                   MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: Just a  
4       few things. Gerry's right. It's actually  
5       July 31st is the date we're shooting for for  
6       issuing the decision.

7                   There are other pictures of  
8       low-level burial grounds and mixed low-level  
9       waste burial grounds, some of which are lined,  
10      some of which are not. There's pictures back  
11      there.

12                  Gerry is right, though. Our current  
13      practice for low-level waste is disposal in  
14      unlined trenches.

15                  MR. DEE WILLIS: Any of the  
16      others, comments? Okay, next question. Sir,  
17      name first.

18                  MR. RICHARD KENTON: My name is  
19      Richard Kenton. That's K-E-N-T-O-N. Just like  
20      it sounds.

21                  For Ken. You mentioned that there's  
22      training for local response groups. My  
23      question is: Who's paying the bill?

24                  MR. KEN NILES: The bill is  
25      being paid for in two respects. We have a --

Panel Discussion (contd)

1 on all the trucks that ship radioactive  
2 materials through the state, they require a  
3 placard. The ones that have enough quantity to  
4 require the radioactive placard on the truck.

5 They pay a fee to the state of  
6 Oregon. It's relatively inexpensive. It's \$70  
7 a truck. And that goes into a fund that we  
8 manage. That goes exclusively for training of  
9 emergency responders and equipment.

10 We also get funds from the Western  
11 Governors Association that originated with the  
12 U.S. Department of Energy, that also provides  
13 for training and equipment.

14 MR. DEE WILLIS: Anybody else  
15 on the panel?

16 Next question, ma'am.

17 MS. TERESA BRAIN: My name's  
18 Teresa Brain, B-R-A-I-N. And my question is to  
19 whomever can answer it. And this seems like  
20 such a huge document about such an important  
21 issue, can you explain the short comment  
22 period?

23 Why aren't we taking the time that  
24 we need to process this to understand what  
25 we're going to make? And these are such

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1 long-term decisions that we're making.

2 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: The  
3 decision that DOE made is largely based on the  
4 familiarity of people through the first go  
5 round, the familiarity with the major issues.

6 That's the main reason, familiarity  
7 with the document and the subjects that are  
8 surrounded.

9 MR. DEE WILLIS: Anybody else?  
10 Shelley?

11 MS. SHELLEY CIMON: I'll speak  
12 to that. Thanks. I'm pretty discouraged  
13 because, you know, besides the Oregon Hanford  
14 Waste Board, we also have a site specific  
15 advisory board called the Hanford Advisory  
16 Board.

17 We asked for an extension and have  
18 not, as Ken said, seen an adequate response  
19 where we're talking about a deadline of  
20 May 27th for comments to be in.

21 My board -- of which I am vice chair  
22 of the Site Specific Advisory Board, Gerry  
23 Pollet's also on the Board -- we work by  
24 consensus.

25 Our next meeting is the first week

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1 of June. We received a letter from the head of  
2 the site, Keith Klein, saying that they may or  
3 may not honor the inclusion of our comments as  
4 a full board.

5 Now, our board's been put together  
6 specifically to speak to the issue of cleanup  
7 and to support the decisions that EPA and the  
8 Washington Department of Ecology and DOE make.  
9 And this really flies in the face of the money  
10 that's being spent to support the work that  
11 we're doing.

12 That's not a satisfactory answer,  
13 but that is the political setting right now.

14 MR. DEE WILLIS: Other panel  
15 members?

16 MR. GERRY POLLET: Mike's  
17 comment, I think, is kind of shocking. I have  
18 not heard this rationale before, Mike.

19 But given the fact that the reason  
20 you re-did the EIS is that the analysis was not  
21 there. To say that we're familiar with it is  
22 ludicrous, unless you only gave us the same  
23 analysis that you'd already done, which you say  
24 you didn't. And there certainly is new stuff  
25 in here.

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1                   So, I mean, the response to comments  
2 page is like five inches or something; that, in  
3 itself, would take someone a month to read.

4                   So I would urge you to go back and  
5 tell your boss they'd better rethink it.  
6 They'd better rethink it, because, you know,  
7 that credibility gap is going to cause a storm  
8 of public outrage.

9                   MR. DEE WILLIS: Ms. Brain, did  
10 you get your question answered?

11                  MS. TERESA BRAIN: I did, thank  
12 you.

13                  MR. DEE WILLIS: Okay. Next  
14 question.

15                  MS. MAXINE HINES: I have like  
16 six.

17                  MR. DEE WILLIS: Give us two,  
18 all right?

19                  MS. MAXINE HINES: All right.  
20 One hard one and one -- I'm Maxine Hines. I  
21 live here in La Grande. I've been coming to  
22 these meetings forever, for as long as Shelley  
23 has.

24                  I just want to always commend the  
25 kids that come. Thank you, guys.

Panel Discussion (contd)

1                   And we'll start with the simple one:  
2     Are there any safe havens in this area that are  
3     now accepting the trucks during bad weather?

4                   MR. KEN NILES: As you all  
5     know, the weather conditions can change pretty  
6     quickly. And it's not always possible to  
7     identify something well in advance where we'd  
8     really prefer a truck to park.

9                   Generally if a truck is caught  
10    knowing it's heading into bad weather and does  
11    need to park in this area, they usually do park  
12    at the truck stop.

13                  If we're aware of a problem sooner,  
14    we from the state level, and can get that  
15    information, we would certainly stop them on  
16    the other side of the hill. Better yet, we  
17    would stop them from leaving Hanford.

18                  But, you know, sometimes they end up  
19    not where you'd like them to be. Absolutely.

20                  MR. DEE WILLIS: Anybody else  
21    on the panel? Next question, Ms. Hines.

22                  MS. MAXINE HINES: One is, and  
23    this one's kind of a long one I think, what  
24    criteria has been established in the EIS on  
25    who's sending what to Hanford, and why? Why is

Panel Discussion (contd)

1 it being accepted?

2 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: Well, the  
3 decision back in February of 2000, the  
4 Department a decision that essentially opened  
5 up Hanford to any other DOE generator of  
6 low-level and mixed low-level waste.

7 MS. MAXINE HINES: So it's all  
8 DOE?

9 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: There's  
10 some navy waste too.

11 MS. MAXINE HINES: Private?

12 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: No. What  
13 you'll see is you'll see some DOE-owned waste  
14 and there's an ownership criteria. You'll see  
15 some DOE-owned waste that is being generated at  
16 private facilities.

17 For example, the Albany Research  
18 Center, several years back, it did a lot of  
19 research for DOE. But DOE owned the waste  
20 itself. And so that came to Hanford.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is that  
22 coming from New York or where?

23 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: Albany,  
24 Oregon.

25 MS. MAXINE HINES: And who's

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1       paying for it --

2                   MR. DEE WILLIS: Just one  
3       second. This lady --

4                   UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I just  
5       wanted to know if it was New York or Oregon.

6                   MR. DEE WILLIS: Keep going.

7                   MS. MAXINE HINES: And who's  
8       paying for it to come to Hanford?

9                   MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: Well, the  
10      taxpayer first. The Department of Energy.

11                   MR. DEE WILLIS: Anybody else  
12      on the panel?

13                   MS. SHELLEY CIMON: Do you want  
14      to respond to that? I'll respond to that.

15                   MR. KEN NILES: Let me just add  
16      one additional bit of facts, I guess, is that I  
17      mentioned this as well and some of you may not  
18      be aware of, there is a commercial low-level  
19      waste disposal site on land leased on the  
20      Hanford site.

21                   So there are trucks going from  
22      11 western and Rocky Mountain states, from  
23      commercial nuclear power plants, from  
24      hospitals, from research centers, from medical  
25      centers, from universities that generate

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1 low-level radioactive waste, and they dispose  
2 of their waste at Hanford as well.

3 On the Hanford side. It's land  
4 leased from the Federal Government. It gets  
5 confusing when you start trying to do all of  
6 that.

7 There's 11 states that, through the  
8 compact system, the national system, to try and  
9 share equally somewhat the burden of handling  
10 commercial low-level waste.

11 Again, that's 11 western and Rocky  
12 Mountain states that can send waste to Hanford,  
13 commercial waste.

14 California is not one of those, by  
15 the way. Which would be a huge generator.

16 MR. DEE WILLIS: Shelley?

17 MS. SHELLEY CIMON: Yeah. I  
18 guess I want to respond a little differently,  
19 because I think Maxine's question is different.  
20 And that is: Who pays for those 70,000-plus  
21 shipments that come to Hanford.

22 What we, many stakeholders, asked  
23 for in response to the first go round of the  
24 EIS was that the site that generates the waste  
25 pays for that waste to come to Hanford.

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1                   What we heard, in this document, is  
2                   that all waste belongs to DOE. So wherever the  
3                   money comes from, it's DOE money.

4                   Of course, our concern at Hanford is  
5                   impacting our budgets; and thus, the cleanup  
6                   that needs to go on at this site.

7                   MR. DEE WILLIS: Gerry?

8                   MR. GERRY POLLET: Well, two  
9                   things, since we're on the record. One, I sure  
10                  would like an answer to your question in this  
11                  EIS, because it's a very good one.

12                  I think Mike may be playing a game  
13                  with words here, because GE Vallenditos is a  
14                  privately-owned site.

15                  Parks Township, Pennsylvania, which  
16                  generated a huge quantity of waste, was owned  
17                  by a private company. And the Department of  
18                  Energy entered into a private superfund cleanup  
19                  agreement, had a small liability.

20                  And in order to lower the cost for  
21                  all the private companies, it offered to have  
22                  the waste shipped, for free, to Hanford. Large  
23                  quantity.

24                  Battelle Columbus Lab is a  
25                  privately-run company that's generating

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Panel Discussion (contd)

1 transuranic waste to be sent to Hanford.

2 And it may be under contract, DOE,  
3 but they made a private cost-saving decision to  
4 cancel their Part B Permit for RCRA hazardous  
5 waste, so that they ship their waste to  
6 Hanford.

7 And I'm quoting from DOE's own  
8 document, it was a "private cost-saving  
9 decision."

10 And there are many other  
11 privately-owned sites that DOE's taking waste  
12 from. Framptone, right next door to the  
13 Hanford site is a private company that expects  
14 to ship its transuranic waste to the Hanford  
15 site, correct?

16 MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: It is a  
17 private company, that's correct.

18 MR. GERRY POLLET: Yeah. And  
19 whether or not DOE did a contract with them,  
20 essentially what it sounds like is DOE said,  
21 "We'll take your waste instead of it going  
22 through the commercial system."

23 And the difference is huge. One,  
24 unregulated/regulated. Two, the difference is  
25 if it's out of the region and it's private, it

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1       can't come here to the commercial site. It has  
2       to go to a commercial compact site.

3               Three, we're talking about who pays.  
4       Well, DOE did a study that found that the  
5       offsite generator typically pays less than  
6       50 percent of the cost of disposal, none of the  
7       long-term costs.

8               If you have to send your commercial  
9       waste to the commercial disposal facility, you  
10      pay dozens of times more per cubic foot because  
11      you have to pay a long-term monitoring fee and  
12      a closure fee to properly investigate and close  
13      the facility and cap it.

14              All of that's going to come from the  
15      Hanford cleanup budget in the future.

16              MR. DEE WILLIS: Mike, do you  
17      have a response to that?

18              MR. MICHAEL COLLINS: A couple  
19      of things. One, I'm not sure about how  
20      ownership gets to be DOE ownership, so I'm not  
21      going to challenge Gerry there.

22              With regard to cost, there's a  
23      couple of things. One, DOE and all government  
24      organizations are very -- don't respond to  
25      economic incentives very well. It just doesn't

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1       happen.

2                   So what DOE has done is they've put  
3 together what's called a pollution prevention  
4 and waste minimization program that does  
5 significantly reduce the amount of waste  
6 produced.

7                   And I think ultimately if you could,  
8 economically incentivise somebody to pay the  
9 full cost, then you're right, you could  
10 minimize waste.

11                   But within DOE, you just can't do --  
12 government organizations just don't respond  
13 that way.

14                   And then the other thing, we have  
15 certain fixed costs that we would bear  
16 regardless if we received waste or not.

17                   That's the reason -- so we already  
18 have these facilities in place and that's why  
19 we only charge to generate -- offsite  
20 generators, just the incremental cost for  
21 actual disposal.

22                   We also have an issue with  
23 collecting future costs. Congress right now  
24 doesn't allow us to essentially charge what's  
25 called a tipping fee and save in it a bank for

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